

# Solomon's Twelve Secrets

## Session 13: All the Wisdom of the World in 30 Minutes

Edited Transcript

Patrick Morley and Brett Clemmer

Brett Clemmer: What are you doing here?

Patrick Morley: What are you doing here? I thought I was teaching today.

Brett Clemmer: I thought I was teaching.

Patrick Morley: Oh, no.

Brett Clemmer: You know, it's a fake chapter so-

Patrick Morley: This was bound to happen.

Brett Clemmer: It's a fake chapter so it must be [crosstalk].

Patrick Morley: Might as well give a fake talk.

Brett Clemmer: Yeah, exactly.

Patrick Morley: Hey, why don't we team teach it this morning?

Brett Clemmer: That's a great idea.

Patrick Morley: Since we're both here.

Brett Clemmer: Yeah.

Patrick Morley: I don't know about you, even though I'm going to be doing half the message, ended up spending twice as much time in preparation.

Brett Clemmer: Exactly. You can do two-thirds then.

Patrick Morley: Okay. Well, good morning men, and welcome to Man in the Mirror, Men's Bible Study, the new venue. Yay.

So we are going to do a couple of things differently today, but we're still going to do a few things the same way. As you know, I have been on bit of a sabbatical for the last few weeks.

Brett Clemmer: I'm not laughing.

Patrick Morley: I was trying to think what in the world could possibly be funny about just saying that.

Brett Clemmer: He said for the last 12 years, when you said three weeks.

Patrick Morley: And ... And

Brett Clemmer: It's not really funny I guess.

Patrick Morley: Whatever. All right, let's start over. Good morning, men. I'm just off a little bit of a sabbatical, it was quite a great time. I did do some camping with my wife. I did eight day hikes, which was pretty fun. I also did some work. The book that we birthed here last year, *The Christian Man*, was written, and edited, and everything. So I got that manuscript back, and I've been going through that manuscript, and that comes out in May. Then I've got another book that I've been putting together a proposal for, and I took a podcasting class with Seth [Godin]. Does anybody know who Seth Godin is? So I went through a little podcasting class. So anyway, it was great time. But as always, towards the end the thing I long to do is to get back to being with you guys and do the bible study.

So, I'm glad to be here. And Brett, I'm glad you're here, and we're gonna do a couple of shout-outs today. Our first one is going to be to Cape Cod Fisher's of Men. What a great name. John Smack in Brewster, Mass is the leader. It's a group of men, they meet on Wednesdays at 8:00, they rotate around different individual homes. John writes, "We are followers of Christ, seeking to grow in our daily walk with Him through His word and prayer, while sharing our journey in support for each other."

Brett Clemmer: Now, Pat. We had another Massachusetts shout-out-

Patrick Morley: Yeah.

Brett Clemmer: Last month.

Patrick Morley: Yeah.

Brett Clemmer: Remember you guys, I told you how to pronounce the name of the city. It's not Billerica, it's Billerica, remember. Well, this is not Brewster, this is Brewstuh.

Patrick Morley: Brewstuh.

Brett Clemmer: Brewstuh, B-R-E-W-S-T-U-H. Say it ... Understand, it's Brewstuh. Brustuh, Mass.

Patrick Morley: So would you-

Brett Clemmer: Hey, John. John Smack. Hey, John.

Patrick Morley: Okay, well Brett, this is what happens when you try and team teach. Okay, so let's go ahead and give these men ... What? You want to team teach.

Brett Clemmer: A warm welcome.

Patrick Morley: All right. Yay. Welcome to Cape Cod Fisher's of Men. One, two, three, hu-rah. Well, we got that right anyway. Okay, then we want to do a second shout-out to one of our area directors, the regional directors, which we're gonna begin doing just to give you and the people online a little bit of a better feel for some of our team members from around the country. Tyler Sutton. Tyler is located in Central Arizona. Tyler says, "There's nothing better than seeing how a man's heart can be transformed by leading a" ... Well, I didn't say that right either ... "There's nothing better than seeing how a man's heart, being transformed, leads to restored marriage, a healed family, a stronger church, and a transformed community. I truly believe that when men get it right, everyone wins." So, there's a picture of Tyler. Let's give Tyler a shout out this morning too, and just say thank you for your service. Tyler, thank you for your service. One, two, three, hu-rah.

Okay, so we're gonna wrap up Solomon's twelve secrets this morning. So everybody, if you would, please turn in your bible to Ecclesiastes chapter 13. So actually, this is a ... We're gonna do a little bit of a summary today. We're calling the talk All the Wisdom of the World in 30 Minutes. So how many times have you heard somebody say, "I just don't feel like my life has any meaning. I don't feel like my life has a purpose to it. I'm having a hard time finding contentment, even though I have gotten exactly what I want, I'm still not happy." Questions like this, and how can we help men who ask these questions.

Well, actually you know, the truth is probably nobody asks those questions out loud, at least at the beginning. But it's when you begin to get to know somebody, that you get the sense that they don't feel like life has meaning or they're not happy, even though they obviously have what they want. So Solomon took on the mission, in this book, in Ecclesiastes chapter one, verses 13 and 14, to search out everything under the heaven. Then in chapter two, he said that I want to define what is it that is worthwhile for a man to do during the few days of life that he has under the sun.

So what Brett and I decided we wanted to do here today, in this lesson ... We've already taught this book for your benefit. But how can we, together, how can we help you turn the book of Ecclesiastes into a tool, a resource, that you can use to help other men asking these kinds of questions. And so, Brett ...

Brett Clemmer: Yes.

Patrick Morley: I told you it was harder to prepare a team teach thing, you know. Trying to work you in here. All right, Solomon tells us what he found on his mission, this mission.

Brett Clemmer: Right.

Patrick Morley: Right. And he also gave us his conclusions, so what did he find and how can we use what he found to help men find happiness?

Brett Clemmer: Yeah, so one of the things that in our conversation ... We were talking all week about this. We are a lot more excited than we're acting about this, by the way. But one of the things that we talked about is how Solomon kind of uses, what I'll call in the modern parlance, trigger words. A trigger word is something that causes you to think of something else. It's used in a negative sense today, but men are out there struggling and when ... What we want you to think about is when you hear one of these trigger words, you think, "Oh, there's an answer to that in Ecclesiastes."

#### **FINDING HAPPINESS AND CONTENTMENT**

I can actually take a man that doesn't even know Christ or who's a cultural Christian, or even a brother who's really struggling, and when he says one of these trigger words, I'll remember that I can go to Ecclesiastes and I can find some truth, some wisdom for him. So the first trigger word, is the word happiness. In fact, we're gonna talk about in this first part here, we're gonna talk about happiness and contentment, happiness and contentment. So the very first week, Pat talked about men who are intoxicated by the world, strong coffee for men intoxicated by the world. You know, I think intoxication is a great metaphor for what a lot of men are going through, because if you think ... What is intoxication? It's taking too much of something that may in and of itself be okay, but it's taking too much of it. Once you've gotten too much of it, reality is distorted. Life doesn't work the way that you want it to work, and then there's a hangover.

So men who are intoxicated by the world, this is what they're doing. They are ... Solomon says very clearly they're looking to find meaning through wisdom. They're looking to find meaning through self-indulgence. If that doesn't work, then they'll try going back to living wisely, he says. And if that doesn't work, then they'll try working harder, toil. Solomon has a word for all this, and the word in different translations is either vanity ... All these things are just vanity, they're just ... What is vanity? It's the outward appearance of something, but there's nothing underneath it. Or meaningless, which is another perspective on the same idea.

So Solomon really, in this book, is talking from the very beginning about how men intoxicated by the world are just going to find ... All these different places that they go and look for meaning, they're gonna find them to be meaningless. And so that Big Idea, the very first week, was apart from God, life has no meaning. Apart from-

Patrick Morley: Oh.

Brett Clemmer: **Apart from God, life has no meaning.**

Patrick Morley: Oh, there it is. Right there.

Brett Clemmer: Right, there. And this is the intoxication effect. You can look for meaning elsewhere, but unless you go to God you're not gonna find meaning, he said. Then the next week, he talked about the next Big Idea was, **If you get exactly what you want, you still will not be happy without God.** So what's the alternative to God? Well, it's things like knowledge, and morality, and industry, pleasure. And what do they all have in common? Well, they're all a man looking to his own effort, to his own self, to find meaning and purpose. And Solomon is pointing out over and over again, throughout, that this just doesn't work.

In fact, if we go to Solomon ... Solomon ... If we go to Ecclesiastes three, 14 and 15, he says this, "I perceive that whatever God does endures forever. Nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. God has done it so that people fear before Him. That which is, already has been. That which is to be already has been, and God seeks what has been driven away." At the beginning, "I perceive that whatever God does endures forever.", so this is juxtaposition to what a man does. Does what a man do endure forever? No. But what God does, endures forever so that's the kind of God that we worship.

So the third Big Idea then was **God will not force you to revere Him, but He will make it impossible for you to be happy, unless you do.** He won't force you to revere Him. Solomon uses a word also throughout Ecclesiastes for revere, and the word is fear. Fear. I think sometimes we see a word like fear of God, and we go, "Oh, well that's that angry God that the whatever denomination you don't like, likes to shove down my throat." Or a non-Christian, or a worldly man, will say, "Well, you guys, you want us to fear God." But fear God doesn't mean being afraid because He's got ill-will towards you. Fearing God is fearing Him because He has absolutely no ill-will. So when you measure yourself up against God's standards, you can't do anything but have reverence. You can't have anything but awe, when you're really looking at who God is.

God won't force you to revere Him, but reality is that God is due reverence. God is due fear, so when life doesn't work out when a man is looking at his work to provide him happiness, at his relationships to provide him happiness, at his seeking pleasure for happiness, it's not gonna work. So when you hear a guy say, "I'm just so miserable.", and you look, and he lives in a nice house, and he's

got a boat, and a great family, and his kids are in great schools, and he's driving a nice car. And you're like, "How can you possibly be miserable?" Well, because he doesn't revere God. Because he doesn't understand who God is, and Solomon's very clear on that.

So this is the application for me. Every person I know who is truly happy, their focus is upward. Every person I know who is truly happy, their focus is upward. Every person that I know, that is truly unhappy, their focus is inward. They're just focused on themselves, and what they can do, and how much harder they can work, or what more they can acquire, or how they need to trade-in the wife for a new wife, or why their kids are disappointing them. Everything is about themselves. But a man who's truly happy, I think you will find that man is, without fail, a man who's focus is outside of himself and upwards toward God.

Patrick Morley:

That's a good Big Idea for the day, if we had a thirteenth Big Idea. That's great. All right, so Brett is gonna do a deep dive on those first three, and then I'll take a little bit of a deep dive on the second three, and then we're gonna spend a lot less time on the others. But I want to go ahead ... In the fourth chapter, the title of the talk was if this shoe fits, don't wear it. We talked about narratives. Different kinds of narratives. When you are talking to men, you will find that many times men have constructed narratives that you can tell are not true. They're wrong. One thing ... One way you can use Ecclesiastes is to say, "Look, you know it's important to make sure that you have your narrative about your life correct, and one of the great places that you can get your narrative sorted out is in the book of Ecclesiastes." The Big Idea for that week was, **In just 30 minutes of painless study, we can learn what took Solomon 30 years of painful experience.**

And then in the fifth chapter, the title was Even if You Can Get Rich, Only God Can Make You Happy. Even if You Can Get Rich, Only God Can Make You Happy. The Big Idea, **Most men think money will do what it won't, and that God won't do what He will.** Ecclesiastes chapter five, verses 10 to 12 are the first verses I memorized in Ecclesiastes, the first year I became a Christian because money was my god. I was struck ... This is the verse, "Whoever loves money, never has enough. Whoever loves wealth, is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless. As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner, except to feast his eyes on them." Then the counterpoint, "The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether he has little or much. But the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep." I wonder if Jeff Bezos is thinking about that this week as he ... As the world's richest man, 127 billion dollar net worth. He and his wife decide that's not enough money to apparently keep them together.

I just think I'm gonna park here very, very briefly. There's a new study out from Harvard, and the title of the study is The Amount and Source of Millionaires Wealth Moderately Predicts Their Happiness. So I did a deep dive. It's a 44 page academic study, and since I know how to read those, I decided I would do a deep dive into it because there have been a lot of news reports, people picking

out pieces of it, and so forth. So I sent Howard Dayton, the money guy ... I'm having lunch with him today, and I sent him a little summary of it this morning. And I called it Can Money Buy Happiness. When you dive into this study, and ask the question, will having more money make you dramatically more happy? Do you think that more money would make you dramatically more happy?

Well, there are three scenarios. You have a lot, you have enough, you don't have enough. If you don't have enough, and you can't pay your medical bills, and you don't have adequate transportation, and you struggle to make your rent or mortgage payment, then it's very clear that money will help your sense of well being. Anybody that wants to spiritualize that, it's just not using common sense. However, ... By the way, there's been some research on that, it's in the study. In 2010, that number, household income, was \$75,000. That was considered to be enough. That'd be about \$87,000 in current money. I think that's probably a little high for what it would actually take to feel like you had enough.

But then, there's the third scenario, and that is you have a lot. It's so interesting. Basically, in this study of about a little over 4,000 millionaires, in 17 countries, a new study says that life satisfaction probably doesn't go up by having twice as much millions of dollars. The scale ... I won't go through it all because it'd be kind of difficult for me to even figure out how to get it across, but they're only these very marginal differences between somebody who has a million dollars of net worth, and somebody who has 10 million dollars of net worth. They're basically the same. In other words, you can be just as happy with one million, as you can with 10 million. You can be just as happy either way around.

My conclusion out of this, there is not a substantial difference, academically. There is not a substantial difference in happiness between those who have a lot of money and those who have enough. If you have enough, and you think that having a lot of money will make you happy, you are scientifically wrong. You're biblically wrong, and that's Solomon's point. The abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep. The sleep of a laborer is sweet whether he has little or much. But it has been now, also for the first time, scientifically and academically proven. So really, above a certain level, more money will not make you dramatically happier or give you a greater sense of well being. In other words, if you're not happy now, getting a lot of money is not the solution.

In fact, there is a correlational link between money and happiness, but it may not be what you think because the authors of the study actually site some research that suggests that instead of money buying happiness, it may be the other way around. There are some studies that find another link. Happy people make more money. Another study found happier people are more likely to get a college degree, get promoted, and are in greater wealth. So the conclusion that I draw, people are not happy because they have more money, they have more money because they're happy. They're magnets. And so ...

Now I don't know how to tie it off, but anyway that's the point on money that Solomon is making is that men think that money will do what it want, and that God won't do what he will. God will give us the contentment as we put our trust and faith in him. Then, six, the ... I've got so many sheets of paper here Brett, I don't even know.

Brett Clemmer: Want some of mine?

Patrick Morley: I just wanted ... I was just trying to remember what the title of the sixth talk was. I don't remember what it was, but **the great secret of contentment is not getting what you want**, and this ties into this Harvard study, **it's wanting what you get**. So Brett, that said, back to you now.

Brett Clemmer: That's happiness and contentment.

Patrick Morley: That's happiness and contentment, and so-

Brett Clemmer: What are the next two trigger words?

### **CONQUERING WORRY AND DISAPPOINTMENT**

Patrick Morley: So let's talk about worry and disappointment, okay? How do we go about conquering worry and disappointment, Solomon style?

Brett Clemmer: I'll do worry, you do disappointment. How's that? Or am I doing both?

Patrick Morley: I don't know.

Brett Clemmer: I don't know.

Patrick Morley: Just get started with [crosstalk].

Brett Clemmer: How many of you know someone with a business problem or a relationship problem? Anyone, anyone? So, worry, right. Worry. So how many of you guys know somebody who's overwhelmed with worry, or overwhelmed with anxiety? Every time you're around them, it's just crushing them.

Patrick Morley: Yes. Several people.

Brett Clemmer: Yeah, we all know people like that. So how do you help a guy that's dealing with that. These are the themes of chapters seven and eight. Chapter seven talked ... Chapter seven, Solomon says this, "**Stop trying to relive the past, control the present, and know the future.**" Relive the past, control the present, and know the future. If you know somebody overwhelmed by worry, he's doing one, or two, or all three of these things. Without fail. So stop it.



Have you seen that Bob Newhart counseling video? I'm afraid of being buried alive. Well, why? Do you like being afraid of being buried alive? No. Well, then stop it. So if you're trying to relive ... If you are reliving the past, controlling the present, and trying to know the future, stop it. And how do you ... That's a dumb thing to say really though. Stop it. No, that's your role. That's your role to step into somebody's life and say, "Hey, here's what's going on." You can't see that when you're doing it yourself. You need a brother to come along, and to help you see what you're doing, and then give you that mirror. Be the be there man in the mirror, and give them that mirror and reflect back to them what they're doing and say, "This is making you miserable. You have to stop doing that."

Then the next chapter talked about, **Because God is sovereign it actually means something when you take personal responsibility for your life.** When you're focused so much on reliving the past, controlling the present, and knowing the future, you're not really taking any responsibility because you're not doing anything. You're just focused on these things that you have no control over. So in Ecclesiastes, the teacher says no. Work on the things you do have the ability to work on. Take personal responsibility for your life and move forward. So this is really ... This is the secret to overcoming worry, is to not worry about the things that you can't do anything about, and instead take responsibility for the things that you can.

A quick side note, if you want to sit with a young man and mentor him as a business man, take Ecclesiastes seven, verses one through 14, and go through it with him in the New Living Translation. It is like a business textbook. Just take Ecclesiastes seven, one through 14, get it in the New Living Translation, go through it verse by verse. In verse 14, he'll become a Christian, if he's a unbeliever, and then you can take him through the end of chapter eight. Just keep on going, but first 14 verses of chapter seven are some of the best business advice I've ever seen.

Patrick Morley:

That's good. So that's on worry, and then on disappointment chapter nine, the Big Idea was that **Most men only know enough about God to be disappointed with him.** So when you meet a man who feels disappointed with what's going on in his life, you can use Ecclesiastes as a tool to point him to the knowledge of God that talks about how to overcome disappointment. Then in chapter ten, we said, **There are very few things in life that can't wait two weeks.** The whole purpose there was just to not freak out on things that take time to develop.

Now Brett, I'm gonna in the couple minutes here we have left, why don't you bring it home and talk about making the shift from meaningless to meaningful.

**MAKING THE SHIFT FROM MEANINGLESS TO MEANINGFUL**

Brett Clemmer: So this is the theme throughout the book. Moving from meaningless, to meaningful, from vanity to meaning. So Solomon says that wisdom for its own sake, pleasure for its own sake, industry, toil, all these things for their own sake are meaningless. It's only in reverence for God that we find meaning. What is that about? Well, that's about worship. So in chapter 11 he talked about what a life of worship looks like. So the Big Idea for chapter 11 was that, **With an eye towards eternity, give generously, pursue opportunity, and live joyfully.** These are the secrets for the happy life, for a meaningful life. Solomon says this is the way you live a life, is when you worship God, when you give generously, pursue the opportunities that he gives you, and then live joyfully as a son of the King.

Patrick Morley: In this Harvard study, some of the other research said this exact same thing, in a secular way.

Brett Clemmer: Absolutely. All truth is God's truth. Then he brings it all together in chapter 12, and he says, "It all comes down to this. Fear God and obey his commands." Now, you can fear a God who is good, you can obey a God who is good. And so our Big Idea was this line, a take off from C.S. Lewis, **God is not safe, but He is good.** You can fear a God whose good, and have reverence for a God that is good and still feel like ... That's the right thing to do. The fear is not a fear of harm, the fear is the fear of not giving God his due. Not giving Him the reverence He's due. I would just say Pat, in conclusion, every man lives by a creed.

Patrick Morley: Every man lives by a creed.

Brett Clemmer: Every man lives by a creed of some kind. Some men's creed is money will make me happy, some guys creed is sex will make me happy, some guys creed-

Patrick Morley: Sex will make me happy.

Brett Clemmer: Well, that's why we don't do these things together. Solomon's creed is this, worshiping God will make you happy. Worshiping God will give you a meaningful life. It will help you move from the meaninglessness of focusing inward, to the meaningfulness of focusing upward and outward.

Patrick Morley: That's good Brett. Solomon starts, meaningless, meaningless, everything is meaningless. Chasing after the wind. So you meet a guy who feels like what's the point, and you say "Well, there's a man in the Old Testament named Solomon, who felt the same way." You can just read him that first couple verses. Solomon also said, and this is in chapter ... Well, it's in chapter five, 18, I'm reading. You can say to the guy that even though you feel that way, and Solomon felt that way too, here's what he discovered and what you can discover too. He discovered, in the words of Solomon, chapter five, verse 18, "Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat, and drink, and find satisfaction in his toilsome flavor under the sun during the few days of life God has given him, for this is his lot. Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and

possessions, enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work, this is a gift of God. He seldom reflects on the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with gladness of heart."

So Brett, we could have them just break up and do the questions in the usual way, or we could try something a little different today.

Brett Clemmer: Let's do that.

Patrick Morley: Okay, let's do something a little different. So instead of you doing the discussion questions one table at a time, why don't we see if we can do them all together? So who ... You want to start that off Brett?

Brett Clemmer: Go for it.

Patrick Morley: I want to say a word about Brett as we move into this time. Brett is the third CEO of Man in the Mirror. I was the first, David [Delk] was the second, and Brett is the third. Actually, Brett is really the first ... In my opinion, the first true CEO that we have had at Man in the Mirror. I always thought that I was a pretty good CEO because I was a delegator. But the reality is that I'm an entrepreneur with an abnormality, and that is I like to delegate. I like to get things started, and then turn them over to somebody else to take care of. That's not actually a CEO I've learned. I have learned so much from Brett in the last two years. I am humbled by the skills that Brett has. I am in awe of how effective he is as the CEO of Man in the Mirror. He has instituted all of the things that were missing in the ministry over the last few years. It's been phenomenal to watch that happen.

Okay, so First Peter three, verse 15 tells us to "Always be ready with an answer, to give an answer for those who ask us for the reason of the hope that we have, but be sure to do this with gentleness and respect." By the way, that's the verse ... You've heard of apologists, and people who explain and give a defense of the faith. That's the verse, that's the main verse, that they all appeal to. To give an answer is the ... I can't pronounce the Greek word. You wouldn't understand that anyway, but it's like apology, except the Y is an IA. You and I would probably say apologia. The Greek pronunciation is very different, but it's to give an apology. That's when somebody says they're apologetic, they're giving their explanation or defense of the faith.

That's what we're doing here, and using Ecclesiastes as a tool, you can do this too. You can use Ecclesiastes to give this answer with gentleness and respect, instead of blowing people out of the water. So you've been in this series now for a few weeks, and most of you ... How many of you lead your own Sunday school class, bible study, or small group? Raise your hands.

Brett Clemmer: Wow.

Patrick Morley: So a lot of you already do that. How many of you have led someone to faith in Christ in the last couple years? Raise your hands.

Brett Clemmer: Wow.

Patrick Morley: So this is ... How many of you are pastors? One, two, three ... And then we have some that are not here. Four. We have a lot of ... This is a bible study of people who are getting things done already, already. So the question here ... Wow, that's a long time to get to a question. Question number two.

Brett Clemmer: Welcome to my world, Pat.

Patrick Morley: Welcome to my world, Pat. How have you used ... And this is just a question if you ... Anybody can answer. How have you used, or do you plan to use, Ecclesiastes in your circle of friends and acquaintances?

Brett Clemmer: Throw a hand up, and I'll run the mic to you. Or how could you see using Ecclesiastes?

Patrick Morley: That's what I said.

Brett Clemmer: Yeah, what Pat said. We're gonna go to table discussion here in a second.

Patrick Morley: That's the back up plan. There you go, in the back [crosstalk].

Brett Clemmer: Oh, here we go.

John Berry: Currently, I'm Stephen's minister at my church, and when the pastor is unable to fulfill, because of his duties, a role with someone who needs long term counseling, that person is referred to a Stevens minister. So in going back through each of the Big Ideas, I'm finding things that will help me, especially with the worry piece. It's now given me some material to do some more work on 'cause that's so often what is the center of some of the things that men worry about. I'm right now between coaching sessions, and wrapping one up, but I'm continuing to hang onto that one who is tremendously worried about his wife's situation with Alzheimer's, and is reluctant to let go, and it's gyrating in the home. So I coach him on worry every couple of weeks. I'm gonna use this for, I think, some of that material.

Patrick Morley: That's great, John. Thanks.

Brett Clemmer: Thank you so much for sharing that. Anyone else? Oh, here. Of course. Anybody in the middle here, anyone? Okay. We'll edit all this out in post, okay?

Patrick Morley: Say you names too, if you would. That was John [Berry] back there.

Daniel Kenny: I'm Daniel [Kenny]. I have quite a few students that I work with at my church. And interestingly enough, a lot of them seem extremely stressed out about school. I never was stressed out, and don't know why someone would be, but apparently the load for some of the young students in our church particularly, seems just overwhelming. This is something that I think I can study more out, and really draw out some truths to give them. To say, "Hey, you know what, your school is important, but it's not everything. Let's focus on what's good and what God is doing right now through you." That's one thing I think I can use with my young guys that I see at church.

Brett Clemmer: Anyone else?

Patrick Morley: [crosstalk]

Brett Clemmer: There you go.

Steve Hall: I'm Steve Hall. I spent time with a younger colleague. I guess it was two nights ago. He recently resigned. He's moving onto a bigger and better job, but he was really struggling with this. I said, "Listen, Brian. What you do is not who you are. Keep your eye on God, on your family, and then using your gifts in productive ways. It's not about how much you're going to make, it's not about spending all of your time doing that. Invest in the people who are going to be at your funeral crying." Where did that come from because he was struggling with this, and he's a man of faith. Just reminding him that all of this is meaningless, it's what we're doing towards the kingdom that's going to matter. I think it made a difference.

Patrick Morley: Yeah.

Brett Clemmer: Anyone else?

Patrick Morley: Thank you, Steve. So Brett, instead of saying anyone else, say who's next.

Brett Clemmer: Who's next? Who's next?

Patrick Morley: Has anybody had a ... Go ahead, Dan.

Dan Fay: Hey, Dan [Fay]. I think just as we are all going to intersect people in our lives that are at this point, or at some point we'll be likely at that point in our lives and we'll need reminding of it. But when we intersect these people, we can point them into this and say just what we've learned here. That at the root of your discontentment, or at the root of your unhappiness is basically a disconnect in your relationship, and we need to fix that and get that relationship on the right path so that's where your happiness will lie.

Patrick Morley: That's good. Thank you so much Dan. Of course, you've done that many, many times, I know. So has anybody had an occasion to use one of these Big Ideas

over the last few months with somebody, specifically? How about yourself?  
Scott.

Scott McCurdy: Scott [McCurdy], God is not safe, but He is good, I used three days ago. I was in Nashville, Tennessee, and thank goodness for Uber, and thank goodness for airplanes because if you live in Orlando and you travel, then you go to Atlanta, and then you go someplace else. You get four times to meet people, and then with Uber you get a couple of times. But a young lady was driving me, and all I said to her was "Good morning, how is your day?" And she started crying. I mean, I thought man what an impact. This cannot go well here. But anyway, when all was said and done ... And to be real honest with you, I don't even know how I remembered that. But I think if we hear it enough, in other words it like God's word, if you study it and you read it ... Even though I'm not really a good memorizer, and I probably can't tell you the chapter, and the verse, and what page it was on, but God's words come to you. I was able to say to her God is not safe, but He is good. And that's what she needed to hear that day.

Patrick Morley: That's beautiful. Thank you so much.

Brett Clemmer: All right. Who's next? Student. Here we go.

Jim Matthews: Jim Matthews. There's a lot of these have to do with if we get what we want, and we don't have God, we're still unhappy. I can remember years ago, we were getting our annual raises, and there was this young lady that was very disappointed. And not wanting to be judgmental, what went through my mind was you ought to be happy with what you've got because you might get what you deserve. And later, I thought with God if we got what we deserved ... I don't think I need to say anything else. So what we have, be happy with it because it is a gift from God, and through Jesus we don't get what we deserve.

Patrick Morley: That's like back to Brett's Big Idea for the day. The only people you know who are happy are focused up.

Brett Clemmer: Focused up, not in.

Patrick Morley: Focused up, not in. That's good, Jim. We could say a prayer ... You guys say prayers for individuals at your tables, and that's the way we do it. We don't do prayers up in the front for a reason, and that is that we only have an hour. It's just not realistic. But we do encourage prayers at the table, however, Jim has Multiple Myeloma. Let me just say a prayer for Jim from the front as an exception, not a precedent.

Our dearest Father, Lord, we do want to lift up Jim Matthews to you. Father, what horrible type of cancer to have, and what a beautiful spirit that you have given him through that. Father, we would ask that in your kindness, that you would let our will actually be your will in this case, and that you would heal him. In Jesus name, Amen.

Brett Clemmer: Amen.

Patrick Morley: All right. Next.

Brett Clemmer: All right.

Speaker 9: Fairly new to the group, but my name is [inaudible]. That scripture you closed with, First Peter three, 15. A lot of us have scriptures that particularly hit them on the heart, and your heart being your mind, your will, your affections, and your conscience. But if I could read that again because what I want to comment on. "In your heart, honor Christ the Lord as holy. Always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who ask you for a reason for the hope that is in you. Yet do it with gentleness and respect." I think hope is the key thing. It's a total buy-in by each of us to who God is, what he requires of us, and what he is willing to do for us. That should make us on fire for Him. I think that also is a way to be a contagious Christian among those we know, and who we run into.

Patrick Morley: That's good. Okay. Who's next. There we go.

Pete Raymond: Hi, Pete Raymond, and I'm also fairly new. I came in about half way into the series, and playing a little catch up online. I just want to say I first read Ecclesiastes years ago, when I was just born again. I interpreted to be some crotchety guy complaining about everything all the time. I just want to say you guys did a great job of really expanding it, and helping me to understand it a lot better, and how it applies to everybody's lives. I just wanted to say that I appreciate that. Now, I'll go back and re-read it and understand it a little better, but thanks a lot.

Patrick Morley: Yeah. Every guy that you know that feels crappy, can read this book and feel more crappy.

Speaker 11: Back in 1998, Pat did this same series. I was here, and I loved it. I drank it up. Meaningless, utterly meaningless. I see men all day long dealing with their life, and finding no value in what they're doing. So I take them ... You can characterize it the way you want, but through Solomon. Who was Solomon? One of the greatest men of all times in terms of his productivity. He had all the wealth. Bezos wouldn't probably match up with him, and so we talk about that and say he goes through, but he says it's all vanity. It's all vanity.

So what is the meaning? When you're looking for meaning, you're looking for significance. I go just before chapter 13 ... It's easy for me to find it. Just before chapter 13, "The end of the matter, all has been heard. Fear God and keep His commandments. For this is the whole duty of man." If you want to summarize what we're about, Solomon does it right there. He takes us through all the [inaudible] of the world, all the things of the world, all the things that we go out and look for, and try to find satisfaction. But when it's all done, fear God,

reverence God, and keep His commandments. This is the whole duty of man. That sums it up for me.

I thanked Pat back a long time ago when he did it, and I talked to him about bringing that information to Australia when I moved out there, and bringing it with me, and so forth. I carried it, and I'm so appreciative to be reminded of it these last few weeks. Thank you guys.

Patrick Morley: You spent eight years in Australia.

Speaker 11: Six.

Patrick Morley: Like I said, six years in Australia. Thank you for your service there.

Brett Clemmer: All right, who's next? Andy.

Andy Corley: Andy [Corley]. I work with ... Well, I'm a sale engineer so I support over a hundred sales people. They're all fairly young people, all trying to figure out where do they fit in life, and how can they make more money, how can they be successful. So they're asking all of these questions, they're trying to figure this out. And so my role, of course being there, is to go through these and actually have an answer. So the application for today is exactly true for me, and that's my goal.

Patrick Morley: Wow. Like it. Love it.

Brett Clemmer: Excellent. Who's next?

Patrick Morley: All right. A couple more. Two more.

Brett Clemmer: Two more.

Brad: Brad [inaudible]. This goes to answering a lot of questions as kids turn from youth into adults. I've got a large family, and that change especially in the 20s, of now I'm adult, this adulting thing. How do I do it? This goes right to it. They think they know. All their friends and everything have pointed them in one direction or another, but this is the direction.

Patrick Morley: That's good. Yeah, I hadn't really though about it as a manual for fathers with sons and daughters emerging into adulthood. It'd be a great study to do in terms of understanding ... For example, just getting across the idea of learning how to be satisfied with your lot in life. That alone would be such a tremendous ... All right, one final person.

Speaker 14: This is just a comment on the study. Up until this morning, we had 12 different studies for me, and I didn't link them together. So today, I was really curious



what number 13 was going to be. But the way you have done this this morning has pulled all this together, and so I see a trend. I see a story.

Patrick Morley: Good.

Speaker 14: So it's really had an impact. I don't know if anybody else feels this way, but as we go through future stories, if it's appropriate I think this is good exercise. A way to wrap up what you've done over a period of time.

Patrick Morley: That's good. This is Brett's idea. The wrap up was my idea, but it was Brett's idea to take it and turn it. Ephesians four, "Give some apostles, evangelists, profits, pastors, and teachers to equip the saints for works of service." So the idea was Brett's to turn this, and turn the whole book of Ecclesiastes, show you how you could use it as a tool in your own ministries. So it was a really nice twist there Brett, congratulations.

All right, so next week, we are going to begin a new series. Do Something Great with Your Life. Cards are one the table, and that actually is the title of the new book I'm writing, Do Something Great with Your Life, which will be ... Something will come out the following year. So the inside story is greatness ... The twist with Jesus is that doing something great with your life has to do with being a servant. There's a little bit of a twist in that, but it'll be a ... Hopefully, it's gonna be a good series. We'll start next week talking about the possibility of greatness. The possibility of greatness, is it even possible?

Want to say anything about that?

Brett Clemmer: I want to, sort of as a follow on to that, talk about what's gonna happen on February 22nd.

Patrick Morley: I love you doing that.

Brett Clemmer: On February 22nd, we are gonna have a Do Something Great with Your Life celebration of the 33rd anniversary of the Man in the Mirror bible study. We're gonna have ... John Rivers is gonna come and share with us. He's gonna talk about Do Something Great with Your Life. We're going to get as many people in here as we can, so you're gonna want to register online. You'll all get ... If we don't have your email address, you need to make sure we get your email address because we'll send you a link to go and register because we need to know how many chicken biscuits to bring. You're supposed to go "Yay, chicken biscuits."

Patrick Morley: From the coop.

Brett Clemmer: From the coop, yeah. From the coop. We're gonna need everyone to register, and this would be a great opportunity to invite that young guy in your office, that neighbor that you've got that you've been trying to reach, the guy who's

giving you one of those trigger words of happiness, contentment, worry, or disappointment, or meaninglessness, or purpose. Bring one of those guys with you and hear John Rivers talk, and then we'll just continue the series on after that as well.

Patrick Morley: Yeah, so what we'll do is we'll use this event to create some momentum, some fresh momentum. This room can seat 220 people, so seating is limited. We'll fill the building, obviously, but seating is gonna be limited. We do have a strategy, not just asking you to bring guests, we have another strategy to invite guests, and we'll be working on that. Then we'll do ... We'll offer the men at the event, the new men who come at the event, a four week follow up study on Doing Something Great with Your Life.

So you've heard John Rivers this morning, if you'd like to know more about that, and unpack that a little bit, join us for the next four weeks for an event that would capture the momentum. Then, we'll see ... After that, we'll see.

Brett Clemmer: Awesome. Well, why don't I say a quick prayer, and then we don't have to run out of this room. So if you can stay for a few minutes, stay at your tables guys and pray together before you leave. Take a little bit of that sharing time.

Patrick Morley: They can't do that. It's 8:00.

Brett Clemmer: I'm just saying, if you can stay, you can feel free to. We don't have to rush out of the building.

Patrick Morley: See, this is problem with having two teachers. I teach one week, there are very few things that can't wait two weeks. Then, he teaches the next week, you need to go ahead and get it done now.

Brett Clemmer: It's just Solomon that said that though. Chapter 10, chapter 11.

Patrick Morley: Then I'm saying-

Brett Clemmer: Get out.

Patrick Morley: We need to be strick. These men have to get to work, they need a dependable ... Any time ... We cut it right at 8:00, blah, blah, blah.

Brett Clemmer: We're ending.

Patrick Morley: Then Brett comes out, "Hey guys, just hang around."

Brett Clemmer: I'm trying to end.

Patrick Morley: You know, feel the Spirit.

Brett Clemmer: Let's pray. Father, bless these men, and bless this word into our hearts, Lord. Would you write these words in our heart, would you help us to remember when a man comes to us and he needs help, he's unhappy, he's discontented, he's worried, he's disappointed with how his life is turning out. He feels like he has no meaning, he has no purpose. Lord, would you bring the words of this book, of Ecclesiastes, to mind? Would you give us the boldness to sit down, to open up your word, and share thoughts that you would lead us to in this book, Lord? And for us, each of us, as we all face these exact issues, Lord. Would you help us to remember the wisdom that comes from Solomon? These 12 secrets that we've had. And Lord, would you help us to focus upward, and not inward? That that is the key to meaning and purpose. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Patrick Morley: Amen. Have a great weekend.

Patrick Morley: See you next week. Hey-